

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEVADA

EMERSON LESLIE,

Plaintiff

v.

BOWEN,

Defendant

Case No.: 2:23-cv-01746-APG-NJK

Dismissal Order

Plaintiff Emerson Leslie brings this civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 to redress constitutional violations that he claims he suffered while detained. ECF No. 4. On July 25, 2024, the magistrate judge ordered Leslie to update his address by August 23, 2024. ECF No. 6. That deadline expired without an updated address from Leslie, and his mail from the court is being returned as undeliverable. *See* ECF No. 5.

I. Discussion

District courts have the inherent power to control their dockets and “[i]n the exercise of that power, they may impose sanctions including, where appropriate . . . dismissal” of a case. *Thompson v. Hous. Auth. of City of Los Angeles*, 782 F.2d 829, 831 (9th Cir. 1986). A court may dismiss an action based on a party’s failure to obey a court order or comply with local rules. *See Carey v. King*, 856 F.2d 1439, 1440-41 (9th Cir. 1988) (affirming dismissal for failure to comply with local rule requiring *pro se* plaintiffs to keep court apprised of address); *Malone v. U.S. Postal Service*, 833 F.2d 128, 130 (9th Cir. 1987) (dismissal for failure to comply with court order). In determining whether to dismiss an action on one of these grounds, I must consider: (1) the public’s interest in expeditious resolution of litigation; (2) the court’s need to manage its docket; (3) the risk of prejudice to the defendants; (4) the public policy favoring disposition of

1 cases on their merits; and (5) the availability of less drastic alternatives. *See In re*
2 *Phenylpropanolamine Prod. Liab. Litig.*, 460 F.3d 1217, 1226 (9th Cir. 2006) (quoting *Malone*
3 *v. U.S. Postal Serv.*, 833 F.2d 128, 130 (9th Cir. 1987)).

4 The first two factors, the public’s interest in expeditiously resolving this litigation and the
5 court’s interest in managing its docket, weigh in favor of dismissal of Leslie’s claims. The third
6 factor, risk of prejudice to defendants, also weighs in favor of dismissal because a presumption
7 of injury arises from the occurrence of unreasonable delay in filing a pleading ordered by the
8 court or prosecuting an action. *See Anderson v. Air West*, 542 F.2d 522, 524 (9th Cir. 1976). The
9 fourth factor—the public policy favoring disposition of cases on their merits—is greatly
10 outweighed by the factors favoring dismissal.


11 The fifth factor requires me to consider whether less drastic alternatives can be used to
12 correct the party’s failure that brought about the court’s need to consider dismissal. *See Yourish*
13 *v. Cal. Amplifier*, 191 F.3d 983, 992 (9th Cir. 1999) (explaining that considering less drastic
14 alternatives *before* the party has disobeyed a court order does not satisfy this factor); *accord*
15 *Pagtalunan v. Galaza*, 291 F.3d 639, 643 & n.4 (9th Cir. 2002) (explaining that “the persuasive
16 force of” earlier Ninth Circuit cases that “implicitly accepted pursuit of less drastic alternatives
17 prior to disobedience of the court’s order as satisfying this element[,]” *i.e.*, like the “initial
18 granting of leave to amend coupled with the warning of dismissal for failure to comply[,]” have
19 been “eroded” by *Yourish*). Courts “need not exhaust every sanction short of dismissal before
20 finally dismissing a case, but must explore possible and meaningful alternatives.” *Henderson v.*
21 *Duncan*, 779 F.2d 1421, 1424 (9th Cir. 1986). Because this action cannot realistically proceed
22 without the ability for the court and the defendants to send Leslie case-related documents, filings,
23 and orders, the only alternative is to enter a second order setting another deadline. But without an

1 updated address, the likelihood that the second order would even reach Leslie is low, so issuing a
2 second order will only delay the inevitable and further squander the court's finite resources.
3 Setting another deadline is not a meaningful alternative given these circumstances. So the fifth
4 factor favors dismissal.

5 **II. Conclusion**

6 Having thoroughly considered these dismissal factors, I find that they weigh in favor of
7 dismissal. It is therefore ordered that this action is dismissed without prejudice based on Leslie's
8 failure to file an updated address in compliance with this court's July 25, 2024, order. The Clerk
9 of Court is directed to enter judgment accordingly and close this case. No other documents may
10 be filed in this now-closed case. If Leslie wishes to pursue his claims, he must file a complaint in
11 a new case and provide the court with his current address.

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13 Dated: August 28, 2024

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16 U.S. District Judge
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